



News Release

For immediate release: November 10, 2010

(10-178)

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Three Children's Hospital facility investigations completed

Investigation continues into health care providers involved

OLYMPIA — The state Department of Health has completed its investigations into three recent cases at Children's Hospital in Seattle.

In all three cases, no "deficiencies" were found in the systems the hospital has in place to keep patients safe. Investigations into the health care providers involved in the cases are still underway.

The facility investigations came after one baby died following treatment in the hospital's intensive care unit, a toddler having a heart procedure suffered brain damage, and reports of an adult who recovered after medication was misapplied during an emergency room visit. Facility investigations focus on the systems, or policies and procedures, hospitals use to protect patients' safety.

The facility investigations have determined that the hospital has effective, adequate systems to prevent patient harm in place. No "deficiencies" in those systems were found. The state Medical Quality Assurance Commission and Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission are still investigating the conduct of the health professionals involved.

The goal of the facility investigations was to find out what happened, and if the hospital had policies and procedures in place to help prevent it. Investigators interviewed hospital personnel, examined the hospital's policies and procedures, reviewed patient and employee records, and discussed safety processes.

In the case of the baby who died, investigators determined the child did receive an incorrect dose of calcium chloride five days before the child died. It's unknown whether that overdose contributed to the baby's death. However, the overdose was found not to be a result of the

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systems and procedures the hospital had in place. The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission continues to investigate the case.

In the case of the child who sustained brain damage, the complaint alleged hospital staffers didn't monitor the boy closely enough following surgery. It also alleged employees took too long to get help because equipment wasn't ready. The investigation didn't bear out those allegations.

In the case of the adult who was treated at the hospital, investigators found the proper medication was given, but by the wrong method. That led to cardiac arrhythmia from which the patient recovered. The hospital had a system in place to track the error's cause, and immediately took steps to keep it from happening again.

In the latter two cases, the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission and Medical Quality Assurance Commission are still investigating.

Meanwhile, the case of another baby who died is still under investigation by the nursing commission and facilities investigators. In that case, it's alleged a nurse gave medication without an order while the baby was being prepared for transfer to Children's.

Note: If you'd like to receive copies of investigative findings in the three cases, please e-mail Allison Cook, allison.cook@doh.wa.gov.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health website at http://www.doh.wa.gov for a healthy dose of information.
